

THE GREAT
ORACLE.
EVEN,

The maine Frame, and
Body of the *Scriptures*, re-
solving the Question, whether
in Mans *Free-will* and common
Grace, or in GODS speciall
and effectuall Grace, stands
the safety of Man, and the
Glory of GOD by Mans
safety.

By F. Rous.


LUKE 16. 31. JOHN 12. 1011.

If they heare not Moses and the Prophets, nei-
ther will they be perswaded though one rise
from the dead.


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at the Signe of the gilt Cup, in Pauls Church-
yard, neere Saint Augustins Gate. 1641.

26.3.12. 11/11/12

X
F-760


R I G H T
N O V R A B L E,
and Deservedly
honoured the La-
dy L V C Y
R O B E R T S.

Madam,

 H I S worke
of Grace, by
many passag-
es of provi-
dence seemd to bee kept
A 3 for

The Epistle

for a yeare of Grace.
And indeed , as any
free Mercy given out
to a Nation , both sin-
full and miserable, may
well beare the Name
of Grace , so more par-
ticularly that may fitly
bee called a Time of
Grace , when Grace
may freely speake for
it selfe, and have leave
to be heard.

This Leave by the
Grace and Goodnesse of
the All-ruling Provi-
dence

Dedicatory.

dence is now obtained
for this worke. A
worke which began
after a conference with
my ever-honoured Bro-
ther, Master Pym,
wherein it was dis-
coursed; That the ve-
ry maine Plot, and
Summe of the Scrip-
tures, was to shew, that
the Will of the rationall
Creature, was onely
safe in the keeping of
the Creator; and there-
fore to the Creator a-

The Epistle

lone did belong the Glo-
ry of this dependant
safely of his Creature.

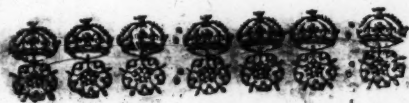
Upon this great sub-
ject, this little worke
(as a narrow Map of a
Large World) being
framed, it casually
came to your Ladships
hands, from whom I re-
ceiv'd it againe, with
a promise to retorne it
in this shape wherein
it now appeares. Accor-
ding to this promise,
(though not without
sundry

Dedicatory.

*Sundry intervenient
difficulties) it is now pre-
sented ; and being made
publicke , if any publick
benefit arise from it, it
owes some acknowledg-
ment to your Ladships
Religious calling for it,
and furtherance of it ;
to whom by the best ob-
ligements of Piety and
many other merits I pro-
fesse my selfe.*

Your Honours acquir-
ed and devoted servant

F. ROV S.



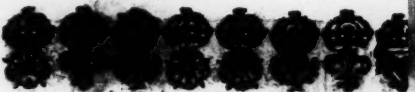
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JOHANNES
HANSLEY.





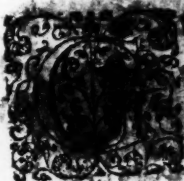
*The same Author hath lately
set forth a Booke called
Catholike Charity in
Answer to Charity mi-
staken.*

*Also another called the
heavenly Academy.
Also the stile of Scorpions.*





THE GREAT ORACLE.



GOD is the end
 of himselfe, in *Sect. 1.*
 all his wayes, *God hath*
 workes and *a plot of*
 Counfells *Glory*
 upon
 Man.
 neither is there any end
 worthy of God, but
 God. Therefore all his
 workes as they begin in
 Him, so they end in him,
 bringing some Glory to
 B him.

2 *The great Oracle.*

him. And among his workes **M A N** being a Chiefe, it must needs be thought, that a chiefe Glory ariseth from Man unto **G O D**. For where **G O D** soweth much, there doth hee meane to require and reape much.

2.
This *plot* is revealed in the word,
Having then a great *Plot* of *Glory*, upon this Chiefe Creature of the lower World, where shall we look for the discovery of this *Plot*, but in that *word* wherein **G O D** hath revealed to Man (as much as may make for his Glory) his wayes, workes and Counsells?

He

Hee hath made his wayes *Psal.* 103.
 knowne to Moses, saith⁷
 the Psalmist; and the Scrip-
 tures are able to make wise
 unto Salvation, saith the
 Apostle, yea they can make^{2 Tim. 3.}
 the man of God perfect; ^{16, 17.}
 which to performe, they
 must needs discover so
 much of Gods wisdom
 to Man, as may make up
 this perfection.

In the word of God^{3.} Most ful-
 then, there being that ly in the
 perfect discovery of Gods main Bo-
 wisdom, and Plot of Glo- dy of the
 ry upon mankinde, let us
 looke into that word of
 God, (and not into the
 wit of man) to find this

worke of God. Neither let us so much looke on single , and scattered parts of it, as on the mayn *Frame, Body and Contexture* of it ; the whole word most entirely and fully representing and expressing the whole worke. For if wee well view and observe the full *Countenance, Concurrence,* and *Frame* of the Scriptures , wee shall therein read as in great Letters, Gods *Plot of Glory* upon Mankinde ; and withall we may see how Mans safety is infolded therein ; and makes up a Chief
part

part of it. For the Scriptures are the *Characters*, and *Representations* of the *mind* of God; and as the *living Creatures* in *Ezekiel*, *whither the Spirit* *Ezek 1.10* *was to goe*, they went; even so these words of life, which way the *highest Spirit*, looketh and goeth, that way they looke and goe also. For the *Highest Spirit*, when he dictated them, did put his mind and meaning into them; and so in them wee may discern the *mind of God*. And the more large and full view, they present unto us, the more fully

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doth the *mind of* God appeare in them, wherefore let us behold them in their fulnesse, and that with a full and enlarged sight, and then shall we more fully and largely discern and see Gods Countenance in their Countenance, Gods ayme in their ayme, Gods mind in their meaning.

4.
The Body of the word best expounds the parts of it.

And having found the mayne purpose, *Plot*, and end of God in the mayne Body of the Scriptures, let us bee sure to hold it fast, as a *Treasure of truth unvaluable*; even an especiall part of that truth, which

which wee should buy at any price, but sell for no price. Besides; this farther *use* and *Advantage* should we make of it, that by the *mayne truth* found in the *whole*, the single and scattered places which make some shew of disproportion to the whole, be expounded and resolv'd, or if the way of reconciling them, be doubtfull and difficult, (as who can deny but that the infinite wisdom of the Creator, may farre exceede all the wisdom of the Creature? those places may
B.4. stand

stand as *secrets* not understood, but they may not breake in peeces that *Body of Truth*, which wee finde by Joynts fitly and proportionably knit together in the *Body of the Scriptures*. And indeed if it were not for our blindnes, those parts of Truth, would readily and aptly joyne with the *Body of Truth*, as members that are cut off from a Body, fitly and manifestly agree, and fall in with that place of the *Body*, wherein before they stood as members. And indeed these peeces of
Truth

Truth are still in themselves at agreement with the *Body of Truth*; as being kinne to it, onely it is the fault of our ignorance, who know but in part, that we cannot derive their Pedigree.

And now because spirituall things are onely spiritually to be discerned; the spirit of God onely enabling us to see 1 Cor. 2.
the things that are freely gi- 12.
ven us of God, therefore with the Invocation of this blessed Spirit, let us enter into the word that issued from the same spirit; that in his light wee

may see light , by his
light within our soules
wee may see his light
without in the word.

5.
In the
word,
first to
beginne
with
mans first
est at . 9
1 *Iohn* 1.
5.
Iohn 1. 9.

And in the beginning,
let us take notice of man
beginning. Man at first
was created according to
Gods Image ; Now wee
know that God is light ;
man therefore was light
also , being enlightned
in his understanding, by
that light which lighted
all mankind in *Adam*.

1 *Pet.* 1.
15.
Eph. 4.
24.

Againe God is Holy,
man therefore was holy;
and indeed the Scripture
tells us , that the Image
of God hath in it *Righte-
ousnes*

ousnes and true *Holinesse*.
Yet was not this holinesse
so knit to the will of
man, but that the will
might put it off, if it
would, or if it would
might keepe it; For the
will of man was set in
such an *Equipoise*, and
freedome, that it might
use *Grace*, or not use it;
and by using it continue
righteous, or by refusing
it, fall from *Righteousnes*.
So that in this Free-
dome, the will of man
was as it were a *Lord* over
Grace, and did rule over
it, either using the service
and ayde of it, if the will
pleased.

12 *The great Oracle.*

Rom. 5.
13. 14.

Gen. 2.
17.

pleased , or refusing it,
when it listed. There-
fore at that time *Grace*
did not raign in the will,
inclining and moving it
effectually and certainly
unto one way ; but the
will was left at Liberty,
to bend it selfe which
way it selfe listed. More-
over to this state of Free
will , was joyned a Law,
and Covenant of works ;
Obey and live ; sinne and
dye. And as two Touch-
stones and summary Try-
alls of mans obedience,
and continuance therein
there was set before him,
Life and Death, a tree of
Life

Life, and a tree of death;
a tree of standing, and a
tree of Falling.

Thus *Adam* being
created with Free-will,
and Free-will-Grace, and
all mankind being now
in *Adam*, it cannot bee
denyed, but that all man-
kind had Free-will, and
Free-will-Grace in *Adam*,
And because all mankind
had it, it might then
rightly be called a *Gene-
rall Grace*; And so it is
acknowledged, that man-
kind had once, a *Gene-
rall and Free-will Grace*.

6.

An estate
of Free-
will, and
Generall
Grace.

But then let it be with-
all observed, what be-
came

7.

But man
soone fell
from it.

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came of man with this
Generall, and Free-will
Grace. How long did
he stand with it, or rather
how soone did hee fall
with it? Surely he stood
not so long as to beget a
Sonne, according to the
Image of his first Inte-
grity : for *Cain* was of
that wicked one, a seed
of the Serpent, *flesh* of
flesh, a Spirit more sub-
till then man, by his
greater and sharper un-
derstanding seduceth,
compasseth, and deceiv-
eth the lesser, and the un-
derstanding being won,
the will and affections
soone

Gen. 3.

2 Cor. II.

3.

soone come after it. And
so the Tree of Death and
disobedience is eaten,
and man-kind with his
Generall and Free-will
Grace is fallen into a ge-
nerall Ruine. He is fal- *Rom. 7. 14.*
len not onely into a sin- *Rom. 8. 7.*
gle sinne, but into a state 8.
of Bondage under sinne.
The love of the Heart of
man is turned from the
Creator to the Creature, *1 Iohn 2.*
and where the love of *15.*
God is defaced, there *Iohn 14.*
can be no keeping of the *15. 21.*
Law of God. For the *1 Iohn 5.*
love of God is the true *2. 3.*
spring and Root of keep-
ing the Law of God. And
any

any action, though never so glittering, if it come not from this love, it is not a worke really and inwardly good, but onely a *Glorious* and a *shining sinne*. Thus *man being in Honour continued not, but became like the Beasts that perish.*

Yet God out of his infinite goodnesse, and wiledome, brings forth a new way for mans restoring. God will not bee robbed of his Creature, by a Creature, much lesse will hee suffer his Plot of Glory upon Mankind, to bee overthrowne

throwne by a Creature,
but by his transcendent
wisedome and Power,
makes good his owne
Plot, even by the Plots
of his adversaries; and so
*his owne right hand and
Holy Arme gets to himselfe
the victory.*

But if man were now
left to his owne choice,
what would he take to be
the best and safest way
for his owne Restoring?
would hee wish to be put
again into the same
State of Free-will, and
Generall Grace wherein
Adam fell? would man-
kind have it tryed, whe-
ther

8.
A Remedy is in-
quired.

ther all men falling in
grosse with *Generall* grace
in *Adam* , they would
with the same *Grace* fall
again by *Retayle* ? and
when every man being
united in one man stood
not, yet whether every
man would stand alone,
being single and parted
from his fellowes ? yea
when all being united in
a state of perfection did
fall, would he have it try-
ed whether single men in
a State of Imperfection,
would Stand by the same
Grace , and against the
same subtill *Serpent* ,
which overcame them
having

having that *Grace* in a
State of perfection? or
rather there being got- *Rom. 7. 19*
ten into man a lust, that ^{23.}
is mighty and active upon
the will, to lead it cap- *Gal. 5. 17*
tive to the Law of sinne, so
that it cannot ever doe
that it would; should he
not beleeeve that there is
a manifest neede of a
Grace mighty and active
to lead the *Captivity cap-*
tive, and by an overcom-
ming Efficacy to incline
the will in the mayne
course of life, to the Law
and will of God? can the
strong man be bound but
by a stronger? and can
the

the Efficacy of lust bee overcome but by an Efficacy of *Grace* ? The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, in the best since the fall of *Adam*; And then if the *lusts* of the *spirit* bee not at least as effectuell on the will, as the *lusts* of the *flesh*, how shall the will but bee still subject and captive to the *lusts* of the *flesh* ? wherefore it seemes man being fallen into the Dominion of a mighty Concupiscence hee should hunger and thirst for a mighty active, and Effectuell *Grace*; even a *Grace* that might
stemme

stemme this Tide of Concupiscence, and aſtuate the will, and as it were, move and carry it up againſt this Tide. Hee ſhould deſire a *Grace* that ſhould rule the will, and by ruling keepe it, rather then a *Grace* to bee moved, ſet on worke, and kept by the will; which man once having, neither kept it, nor himſelfe by it. And indeed if this bee the fruit of Free-will attended with *Generall Grace*, that it will looſe it ſelfe, *Grace* and all mankind; how plainly doth it appeare, that
there

there is a *more solid*, yea a *more large mercy* in giving an *Effectuall* and preserving *Grace*, though to never so small a part of mankind, by which that part may bee kept sure to salvation, then in giving, such a *Free-will-Grace* to all, with which all will *Freely*, and *Certainely* run to Damnation.

9.
Gods re-
medy.

Now the great Creator, that made man, and therefore knoweth him thoroughly; even his true weaknes, and his Imaginary strength, foresaw both what *Grace* man needed to stand, and with

withall what little need
of such a *Grace* man
would acknowledge. He
foresaw that the Rem-
nants of Free-will and
naturall *Grace* being joy-
ned to the new Pride,
and Imaginary *Godhead*
gotten by the Fall, would
puffe up man with an o-
pinion of selfe-sufficien-
cy, and make him beleieve
that he is able to stand by
such Remnants, or at
least by some outward
helpes added to them;
And no wonder if God
foresaw what indeed af-
terward came to passe;
For hee *understandeth all* ^{*Esa. 46.*}
thoughts ^{*10.*}

24 The great Oracle.

*Dcut. 31. thoughts a farre off, declar-
16. 21. ing the end from the begin-
ing, and from ancient times
the things that are not yet
done. And surely these
High opinions have so pre-
vailed that they have
passed through all Man-
kind in the severall di-
stinctions of it; Gentiles
(or sonnes of Nature)
Iewes and Christians. For
such have beene the Po-
sitions of Philosophers,
the top of the Gentiles;
of iustitiary Iewes, and of
Philosophicall Judaizing
Christians.*

PHILO-

PHILOSOPHERS.

EGo verò quid cognosce-
re studeo? Naturam &
hanc sequi. Epictet: Ench:
Cap. 73. Nec est quisquam
gentis ullius, qui ducem Na-
turam nactus ad virtutem
pervenire non possit. Cicero
de Legib. lib. I. Interim
quod inter omnes Stoicos
convenit rerum naturæ as-
sentior. Ab illa non deer-
rare, & ad illius Legem, ex-
emp. ùque formari sapientia
est. Beata est ergo vita con-
veniens Naturæ suæ. Senec.
de vit. Be. cap. 3. solemus
dicere, summum bonum
esse secundum Naturam vi-
C vere.

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vere. It. Ite cap. 31.

Justiciary Jewes.

A*Nd hee tooke the Book
of the Covenant, and
reade in the audience of the
people, and they sayd: All
that the Lord hath said will
we doe, and bee obedient:
Exo. 24. 7. The like ver.
8. of that Chapter, and
Chap. 19. 8. And Deut.
5. 27.*

*Behold thou art called a
Jew, and retest in the Law,
Rom. 2. 17.*

*Being ignorant of Gods
Righteousnes, and going a-
bout to establish their owne
Righteous-*

Righteousnes : Rom. 10. 3.

Judaizing and Philosophicall Christians.

B. *Iob. aperiens occultas naturæ divitias, & in medium proferens, ex se quid omnes possemus ostendit. Pelag. ad Demetr: Populum ambulantes concessa arbitrij libertate sic arguit: Educ Foras populum cæcum & Oculos habentē; surdum & aures ei sunt; Hic quod surdus, & cæcus est, contumaciæ intelligitur esse, non Naturæ. Faust. de lib. Arbit. lib. 1. cap. 9.*

Of Enoch he saith, *Fidem ipsam cum Lege Naturæ sibi traditam fuisse. Lib. 2. cap. 6.*

And Cassian: *Collat: Dubitari non potest inesse quidem omni animæ Naturaliter virtutum semina.)*

10.
Gods
wisdom
in dis-
pensing
the Re-
medy,

Yet howsoever man might thinke so well of himselfe, that his naturall sufficiency needed none, or little helpes, (the heart of man being so deceitfull that it deceiveth it selfe) yet God who searcheth & knoweth the heart and Reyns, both saw this deceit, and knew mans neede; and there-

therefore gives a double Remedy; one to helpe his neede, and another to heale his deceit. If he should not give the former, mans salvation would be lost, and if he gave not the later, Gods Glory out of mans salvation would bee lost: without the former, man were lost both to God, and himselfe, being still subject to Satans Conquest; without the later, man would not give unto God the glory of his saving Grace, which the false opinion of his owne Natural sufficiency,

Heb, 9.

would take from God,
and give to himselfe.
Therefore God provides
a Medicine for both ;
And first to helpe his
Neede, he gave man a
better , mightier , and
more stable, and stablilh-
ing Roote then *Adam* ;
and a better Covenant of
Grace and better promi-
ses , then were given to
him, and to us in him.
But withall in the second
place to cure mans *Pride*,
and *selfe-deceiving* , Hee
useth such an order , in
sending of this Roote,
and dispensing this *Grace*,
that hee will shew unto
man

man a plaine Evidence,
and Demonstration of
his Neede , before his
Need be over-plentifully
satisfied. God will not
bee a Physitian to the
whole , but to the sick,
lest hee be taxed for a su-
perfluous and unnecessa-
ry Physitian, and so loose
the thanks and Glory of
his Cure.

And now in the first ^{II.}
place for the supply of ^{The sta-}
mans necessity, he giveth ^{ble safe-}
such a seed of the wo- ^{ty of this}
man , as shall assuredly ^{Remedy.}
breake the Serpents ^{Gen. 3.}
Head. The Roote, Head, ^{John 17.}
and Top of this seed is ^{21.}

C 4

knit

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knit to the Deity by a
personall union , con-
ceived and filled with the
spirit without measure,
Rom 8. and so is the *first-Borne a-*
29. *mong many Brethren.* Yet
the rest of the seed are
Heb. 2.11 his Brethren , and hee is
not ashamed to call them
1 Cor. 6. so ; and if brethren, then
17. one spirit , and one seed
with him. Therefore the
Scripture speaketh not of
seeds as of many , but of
one seed which is Christ.
Eph. 5. For the chiefe seed be-
30. &c. ing the Head , and the
1 Cor. 12. inferiour seed being the
12. Body, this Head and this
Body make up one Christ
in

in a myfticall union. And
Chrift thus knit together into one feede of the woman doth overcome the Serpent, and breake his Head. The whole feed of the woman, is at Enmity with the whole feede of the Serpent; and the victory is given to the whole feede of the woman, with whom was that Enmity. Accordingly we see that the Serpent fighteth, not onely with that Manchild, who was *to rule the Nations with a rod of Iron*, but he makes warre with the Remnant of

*Rev. 12.
v. 5.*

v. 17.

- the seed of the woman,
which keepe the Commande-
ments of God. And as*
- v, 12. *Christ overcame, so doe
these also overcome the
Dragon, by the blood of
the Lamb ; (which is the
bruising of his Heele,
even the breaking and
passion of his Humanity,
by which the Serpents*
- Heb. 2. 14 *Head is broken,) and be-
cause Greater is hee that is
in them, then hee that is in*
- 1 Job. 4 4. *the world. This is Christ
that Rock who is not
only in himself unmove-
able and unconquera-
ble, but hee maketh the
Church also unconque-
rable,*
- Mat. 16, 18,

nable, which is built on him. The Deity is a sure Foundation ; and the Humanity of Christ united to this Deity, and as it were grounded on it, hath in it an infinitely farre greater stability then *Adam* a meere Man standing upon the Bottom of his owne free-will. And as it is more stable in it selfe , so it gives a greater stability to the Seed issuing from it, then that which issueth from the meere Humanity of *Adam*. A seed-issuing from God and Man, hath a greater stability

12.
By union
of the
Deity
with Hu-
manity.

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1 Cor. I. 9.

Gal. 3. 26

27.

Eph. 2. 22

1 John I.

3.

1 Pet. I.

2. 2.

bility, then that which
 issueth from a meere
 man. And especially since
 to those into whom this
 seed of God doth enter,
 it gives a *Communion*
 with *God*; and knits
 them to the Deity; and
 builds them upon it. So
 is it in it selfe an immor-
 tall and incorruptible
 seed, as being the seed
 of God an immortall Fa-
 ther; and it is also strong-
 ly nourished and main-
 tained in life and Im-
 mortality, by the union
 which it hath with the
 Deity. Therefore the
 beloved Disciple not on-
 ly

ly saith; *He that hath the* ^{1 Iohn 5.}
Sonne hath life, but whoso- ^{12.}
ever is borne of God doth
not commit sinne, for his
seed remaineth in him. It
is a living and Remaining ^{1 Iohn 3.}
seed which is borne of ^{9.}
God; and if it still live
and remayne, it must
needs be also victorious
against the Serpent,
without which victory it
cannot live and remaine.
And accordingly the
same Apostle affirmeth;
Hee that is borne of God ^{1 Iohn 5.}
keepeth himselfe, and that ^{18.}
wicked one toucheth him
not, that is, he toucheth him
not with sin unto Death, for
of

of this sinne, he was last speaking. Hee cannot touch the seede of God in the Children of God, to sting it unto eternall Death, and so to kill the life immortall which is in it. But the seede of God hath power given to it, to tread on Scorpions, and all the Power of the Serpent, even from God in Christ, the Father of this seede. And thus, and thus onely doth it appeare, how the promises of the New Covenant are truly and really made better then those of the old, even by a
migh-

mightier and more stable
Grace , issuing from a
mightier and more stable
Roote of *Grace* , by a
more High and Heaven-
ly Generation ; this seed
of the New Covenant
being begotten of God,
whereas the seed of the
old Covenant was be-
gotten by man. A more
various and larger de-
scription of which pro-
mises and advantages gi-
ven in the New Cove-
nant to the Son of God,
and seed of the woman,
may bee found in divers
places of the Scriptures,
where the seede of the
New

New Covenant receiveth promises from God, to bee made stable as the Sunne; Not to faile for ever; That the Lawes of God shall be written in their Hearts, not as in the old Covenant, wherein they continued not; and that the feare of God shall be so imprinted in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Him. All which are summarily contained and comprehended in this one great Promise, the seed of the woman shall breake the Serpents Head. A promise which is even the brieft and summe of the

the new Covenant of grace, given to man upon the breach and forfeiture of the old Covenant of workes; broken and forfeited by Free-will attended with generall grace; the grace of the old Covenant.

And now how can we chuse but glorifie the great wisdom and goodnes of God, where-
by hee would not trust man againe wholly with himselfe, who hath once already lost himselfe to the Serpent, but out of man-kind lost by Free-will with common
Grace

13.
wherein
Gods
wise
goodnes
shames
Mans
foolish
Mercy.

Gm. 15.
5. Grace, saves a seede like
the Starres of Heaven, that
cannot be numbred, out of
every Nation; even a Ca-
tholike Church, and e-
stablisheth it against the
Gates of Hell, by the
Grace of the New Cove-
nant? and is it not also
to bee lamented with
teares of Bloud, that
there should bee men so
mercifull in shew, but
cruell in deed, who
when God would save
such a Numerous seed
out of lost mankind by
a safe and stable Grace,
will needs have all lost a
second time, by putting
them

them againe into the
keeping or loosing of
their owne F R E E-
W I L L attended with
the Grace of the Old
Covenant , wherewith
all have once already pe-
rished, even in a state of
perfection? As if it were
not a more solid, yea a
larger mercy, to save a
great Number, even a
number which no man
can number, by speciall
Grace, then to loose all
by Free-will, assisted
with a generall grace;
It is a good turne for
man, that God is wiser,
and more mercifull for
man,

44 *The g^reat Oracle.*

1 Cor 1.
25.

man, then man for himselfe; yea, even that which to the carnall man seemeth foolishnesse, and cruelty in G O D, is greater wisdom and Mercy, then the seeming wisdom and Mercy of men; yea the wisdom and Mercy of men, in respect of these in God, is true Folly and Cruelty. For indeed if God by his true wisdom and sure mercies had not *left us this seed* by speciall grace, mankinde had generally beene like *to Sodom and Gomorrah*, with his Free-will and generall grace. But

But because mankind by his Pride and Folly, (whereof before some paternes have beene produced) is hardly brought to know and acknowledge his owne Instability when hee is left to Free-will, nor the need of the grace of the New Covenant, but dotes upon his owne abilities, and the Power of Free-will assisted with naturall grace, that God who for his owne glory saveth a seed by his speciall grace, and cannot have his glory, without an acknowledgement of the neede
of

Yet God cannot have his Glory without a wise dispensation of his goodnes.

of this *grace* ; to gaine his glory by this acknowledgement , doth give unto man plaine experiments of the need of speciall *grace* , before it be more generally exhibited. And to make these Experiments the more plaine and palpable , the seed of promise endued with speciall *grace* is small in number, during these experiments ; But the number of those who are left to Free-will and naturall *grace* is the greater ; that so in the greatnesse of these, the way and issue

sue of Man-kind with Free-will and naturall grace, and without effectuall and speciall *grace*, may more plainly bee discerned.

We have seene already, one great experiment of Mans frailty, standing upon his owne Free-will; and falling by so standing. Free-will hath lost all man-kind already, and yet mankind thus lost is not out of love with Free-will, but thinkes well of that by which it hath beene lost, and undone. It seemes a brave thing
for

Charren in
his Pre-
face of
wisedom.

for a creature to stand alone, and out of his owne Freewill, and naturall abilities to bring forth Actions of vertue. And these home-borne and naturall vertues doe cast such a Lustre on the eyes of naturall men, that some of these, though masked in the shapes and visours of Divines, have not doubted to preferre these vertues of *Free-will* and *Nature*, before those of *Divinity*. And yet a man would thinke, that the *Bruise* which Free-will hath gotten by the Fall of *Adam*, should have

have brought wise men into some distrust, if not dislike of it, especially if with a right eye they could but looke into the inside of these vertues, yea into Free-will it self, and see the *Love of God*, the very *soule* and *life* of goodnes, and good Actions, dead and vanished. For if the love of *God* be not in the will, the very life of goodnes is lacking, and so the will is a *dead Root*, and the works which it brings forth, are but *dead workes*. They are but the carcasses of vertues, and not vertues

D them-

themselves. But the Truth is, that though Free-will hath lost the excellency of it by the Fall, it hath gotten something in stead of it, to make it up; and that is Pride; Pride and the will fallen, thinke better of themselves now, then the will with *Gods* perfect Image did thinke of themselves before the fall. Then the will did thinke of it selfe that it needed something, and therefore it desired an Addition, and fell by that desire. But now the will thinkes that it is Rich,

Rich, and hath neede of
nothing; though indeed
it needes the more, the
lesse it thinkes that it
needeth. And this need^{15.}
would God teach it by To this
these experiments. And end by
indeed even in this state some ex-
of the Fall, there is so peri-
much free-will left, and ments,
of that naturall Ability man must
(which some call natu- bee con-
rall grace) that by this vined of
Remnant or piece, there his need,
may bee a Tryall made of Gods
what man would doe, if goodnes
hee had the whole. It is and grace
the very sentence of effectuall.
Truth it selfe, that by
the faithfulnessse in little,

the faithfulness in much is found, and discerned. True it is, that at first, the Image of *God* was so whole in Man, that *God* might have seene his likenes in man, as in a little Glasse or Mirrour. But now the glasse is broken, yet so broken, that there remaine some pieces and parcells of it, though looking away from the Creator to the

Rom. 2. 15

Creature. There is some light in the understanding, some *Freedome* in the will, and some approving good, and accusing of evill in the Conscience.

So

So that it cannot bee denyed , but there is so much left of the first naturall Ability , as may serve to continue and preserve mankind. *Cain* might and did know , that it was a wicked thing to kill his Brother *Abell* ; and this he sheweth , even in the hiding of his Murther, and shifting it off with this churlish Question , *Am I my* Gen. 4. 9.
Brothers keeper ? Yea knowing it to bee wicked, hee might have chosen whether hee would have done it. And here-upon is grounded the

54 *The great Oracle.*

Rem. I.
19. 20.

Gen. I.
27. 29.

Justice of humane Lawes,
punishing offences a-
gainst common society;
which also are forbid-
den in divers Precepts
of the second Table. Yea
there is left in man so
much light, that he may
thereby see in the Crea-
tures, the Impressions
and Characters of the
great wisdom, and
Power of the Creator;
And find out *God* there-
by in such sort, that with-
all hee may finde him to
bee a *Spirit*; and that
God ought to bee wor-
shipped as a Spirit, with
a spirituall worship. Yea
hee

hee may easily see and finde, that the Creator is farre more excellent then his Creature, and being the chiefeft Essence should have the worship of mans chiefeft part. And on the contrary hee might as easily *Rom. 1, 20. &c.* finde that it is most unreasonable that the glory and worship due to the Creator should be taken from him, and given to the Creature, and so by a perverse confusion, the Creature in worship bee preferred before the Creator.

Now to these Rem-

D 4 nants

16.
A great
Experi-
ment of
this
Need
in the
State of
Nature.

nants of *Free-will* and
naturall *grace* doth God
generally leave the first
world. A world which
besides a high *degree* of
naturall *Ingeniosity*, dis-
cerned in their inventi-
ons of Arts, had very
long lives; by the help
of both which, they
might have largely dis-
covered the great Wise-
dome and power of God,
in a large discovery of
the Impressions of this
wisdom, and power
stamped on the Crea-
tures both in Heaven,
and Earth; And here-
upon they might and
should

should have given the more Honour, and service to the Fountaine of this wisdom and power. So also by the same helps and Advantages, they might have found out more fully and largely the *Cases* of Equity, and Justice, for the preservation of common society, and the welfare of mankind. And now because this world is so generally left to the state of Nature, and the Remnants of naturall *grace*, this time is as it were by common consent called, *the Time of Nature.* D 5 But

17.
Where-
in is a
generall
corrupti-
on by
Free-will.

Gen. 6. 11
12.

verse 5.

But behold now what
is the issue of this *State*
of *nature*, and what be-
comes of men thus left
to the Remnants of *free-*
will and naturall *grace*?
Let not me, but God him-
self tell it; *The Earth had*
generally corrupted it selfe,
and was filled with Cruelty.
The Imaginations of mans
heart were all evil, & only
evil, & continually evil. O
unhappy *free-will*, thus
still bringing forth most
miserable consequences.
And now let men chuse,
whether they wil say that
in this time, which is cal-
led *the time of nature*, man
was

was left onely to the Remnants of *naturall grace*, or had a new *generall grace* given unto him; for the more of this *generall grace* is said to bee given to man in this *generall Apostasie*, the more doth it appeare, that *generall grace* will not keep man from a *generall Apostasie*. Indeed it seemes to mee, (and I thinke it did so to the Creator himselfe, for wee reade of no such new supply) that the Remnants of the old *naturall grace* might suffice for an experiment, and that by these it might

60 *The great Oracle.*

*Luk. 16.
10.*

might bee seene , that he
who is not faithfull in little,
will not be faithfull in much;
and that they who fall
into divers sinnes , into
which they might not
have fallen, by the help
of these Remnants ,
would also fall, though
they had more helpe of
the same kinde , which
would leave them as free
to fall, as these doe. And
this *naturall* grace best a-
grees with the Title, gi-
ven to this time, *the time*
of Nature : yet if any
will needs have it so, that
man in this time , receiv-
ed a new *generall* grace,
the

the grant hereof will but gratify them with a disadvantage. For behold the excellence and glorious issue of this new generall grace; *A new generall Fall*, followeth this new generall Grace; the Imaginations of Mans Heart, notwithstanding this grace, are continually and generally evill. And thus as man fell with it in grosse in *Adam*, so now hee falleth with it by Poll in this *old world*. So that the more of this generall grace you doe now give unto man, the more you set forth
Mans

62 *The great Oracle.*

Mans instability with it; and the lesse Honour or strength and Efficacy you give unto it. For if man thus fall in the *new fulnesse* of it, it appeareth plainly, that by the very *fulnesse* of it man will not stand. And is not such a *grace* exceeding desirable, and worth the bringing in with strong contention, wherewith the world hath bin twice undone, once in *Adam*, and once again after *Adam*? Can wee thinke so well of our selves, that when *all men* fell with it in perfect *Adam*,

Adam, and a world of *ingenuous*, and *Renowned* men fell with it since *Adam*, yet wee will stand by that wherewith the world hath thus twice fallen. If any man think so, there is the ods of two worlds against one man, that hee will fall also. But were it not a farre wiser way to hold *free-will*, and *Free-will-Grace*, a glorious, but a dangerous *Priviledge*, and by the experiments of these *generall falls*, to learne and acknowledge, that *free-will* with such naturall and *generall* grace,

64 *The great Oracle.*

grace, will serve for little other use but to make experiments ? even experiments that man will not stand alone by the strength of *free-will* attended by this kinde of *unruling* and *unstablisshing grace* ; But that the will of the Creature hath need of the hand of the Creator , to settle and establish it, even a stable seede of actuating and confirming *grace*, ever nourished, supplied, and supported by *union* with the *Deity*.

And as in this whole world thus extremely,
and

& universally corrupted, ^{18.}
 we have seene the insta- Yet one
 bility, and *Apostasie* of man
 mankinde with *Free-will*, stands
 and naturall *grace*, So in upright
 one man which stood by effe-
 when this World fell; *Grace*.
 Let us behold the stabi- When
 lity of the seed of God, the whole
 even the seed of the wo- world
 man, established by a falls
 Powerfull, effectuall, and with *free-*
 enduring *Grace*. For of *will* and
 one man, even of *Noah*, *Gen. 6. 5;*
 it is said, (as of an excep- ^{8.}
 tion from this generall
 corruption) *But Noah*
found grace in the eyes of
the Lord.

Now what *grace* was
 this

this which *Noah* found ?
or by what *grace* did hee
finde this *grace* ? shall
wee thinke that *Noah*
stood alone, by the same
Free-will-Grace , with
which all the rest of the
world perished ? shall
wee thinke that *Noah*
discerned himselfe from
a whole world , and so
give the *glory* of this dif-
ference to *Noah*, and not
to *God* ? shall wee say,
that all mankind had one
and the same generall
grace, but *Noah* onely by
his *Free-will*, made use
of this *grace* , and stood
by it, when all the rest
fell

fell with the same *grace*?
If we should say so, yet
what shall wee thinke of
this state of *Free-will*, and
generall grace, which
comes to this fearefull
issue, that therewith a
whole world perisheth,
and but one man findeth
grace? shall we magnifie,
or desire such a State,
wherein it is a *Million to*
one, yea a *World to one*,
that but one of a World
will stand? or shall wee
preferre that as the best
Estate of *Grace* and *Mer-*
cy, which giveth no more
stability to those that
have it; but that all save
one

68 *The great Oracle.*

one will fall with it ?
And if a man doe but
cast a glance of a seeing
eye, on such an Estate,
doth it not presently
look like an Estate under
the *Covenant of Justice*,
and not under the *Cove-
nant of grace* ? O Let us
then be still afraid of this
State of *Free-will*, and ge-
nerall *grace* thus still at-
tended with generall *Ru-
ines*. And let us mightily
accuse mans *Pride*, which
by his opinion of stand-
ing with *Free-will* and ge-
nerall *grace*, calls upon
God for a restraint of his
speciall *grace*, and a per-
mission

mission of these generall
Falls with a *Free-will*, and
generall *Grace*, that by
these Experiments mans
Pride being abated, *God*
may have leave at length
more generally to be-
stow his speciall *grace*,
without loosing the Glo-
ry and Prayse due to him
for it. For even by the
Restraints of this *grace*,
God aymes at the *Catho-
lick enlargement* of it;
when by such *Restraints*
Mankind is fitted for this
enlargement. In the
meane time, while wee
bewaile the generall ru-
ines of *Free-will*, and ge-
nerall

nerall grace, let us take notice of the stability of *God's special and effectual grace*, to the Glory of the Author of it; For by this *speciall grace*, one Man can stand alone, amid the Ruines of Mankind, falling round about him with *Free-will*, and *generall grace*. Though the Serpent prevaile over a world of naturall men, and turne them into his owne feede, yet hee cannot prevaile over one man, being the spirituall seed of the woman;

Gal. 4.26 The Mother which is above is free, and her children will

will not be brought into ^{Psa. 51.}
 Bondage ; being borne ^{12.}
 of that *Free Spirit*, which ^{2 Cor. 1.}
 is mightier then the spi- ^{21. 22.}
 rit which is in the world;
 and stablisheth those
 that are borne of it ;
 There is more stability in
 one man borne of *God*,
 under the Covenant of
 speciall and effectuall
Grace, then in a world of
 men under the Law ,
 with *free-will* and natu-
 rall *grace* ; one man sta-
 blished by speciall *grace*,
 shameth a world of men
 falling with *free-will* and
 generall *grace* ; and this
 world of men falling
 with

with *free-will* and *generall grace*, magnifieth the stability of *speciall Grace*, whereby one stands, when that world of men fell with the other. And thus withall *God* exhibiteth the victorious seed of the woman in that one that standeth, and gives a mayne Experiment of the great *need* of that *grace*, which begetteth and supporteth this seed, in the midst of a world

19.

A greater
Experi-
ment of
the Need
of effe-
ctuell
Grace.

that falleth.

Yet this point of Hu-
mility, in acknowledge-
ing mans need of *Gods*
establisht *grace*, is not
suf-

sufficiently Learned.

There is yet an opinion,
that man with generall
and naturall *grace*, ma-
naged by his owne *Free-*
will, will stand upright;

especially if he be aided, *Dent. 5.*

animated, and stirred up *27.*

with strong outward *Iob. 4. 48.*

helpes and motives, such *& 6. 30.*

as are *plaine directions*, *1 Cor. 1.*

and *commands*, and espe- *22.*

cially *signes and wonders*: *Luk. 16.*

Yea it seemes this opini-

on is gotten into Hell it

selfe, That man with an

extraordinary *signe* will

beleeve, though hee will not

otherwise beleeve by ordina-

ry meanes. Wherefore

E this

this opinion hath neede
also to bee confuted by
some plaine Experiment,
that man failing with
such helpes joyned to na-
turall or common *grace*,
the neede of *Gods* speci-
all and effectuall *grace*,
may absolutely appeare;
And that all helpes be-
sides this *grace* being gi-
ven, and not availing;
mans sure helpe may bee
seene to stand in this a-
lone; And thus at last by
such degrees of tryall,
the absolute need of this
grace being made appa-
rent, the bestowing of it
in a greater measure
may

may bee seasonable , because then it may gaine due prayse and Glory to the giver of it , whose glory is the very end of Mankind, and of all the dispensations of *grace* in whatsoever changes and varieties. And indeed it is more worth then all mankind, yea then the whole Creation.

Now towards this glory, by this utmost experiment , The world is to be peopled againe , and filled with Nations ; But among these Nations , *God* will not onely *take*, but *make* a nation as an

20.
By giving
all out-
ward
Helpes
to Free-
will and
Naturall
Grace.

7 *The great Oracle.*

High and Chiefe Master-
piece, and Paterne of all
Nations ; In this piece
shewing what the whole
would doe, or rather not
doe, with all outward
Improvements. And in-
deed if all the world
should lay their wits to-
gether, they cannot de-
vise such helps and Im-
provements as *God* gave
to this People. For at
the very beginning, *God*
did make them by *Mira-
cle*; so that they them-
selves are a *Miracle*, be-
ing raised to life from
two that were dead ; For
thus miraculously was
Isaac

Rom. 4. 19

Isaac borne , and this Nation in him. The preservation also of this Nation , in *Jacob* from *Esau* was miraculous ; And in the *Patriarkes* preserved from the Famine , through the Dreames of *Ioseph* , the Butler, and *Pharaoh*, many wonders were joyned together ; but above all , if wee behold the strange Acts of *God* done in *Agypt* , for the deliverance of this Nation, there may we see wonders so extraordinarily wonderfull , that *God* *Deut.* 4i
34. himselfe affirmeth that

in them hee had shewed
*his mighty hand and out-
stretched Arme.* And as
he brought them out of
Egypt by wonders, so he
led them by wonders
through wonders; even
by a Pillar of a Cloud,
and fire through the *Red
Sea*; the *Sea* opening to
them, and making a
Path for them, but shut-
ting it selfe upon their e-
nemies, and utterly de-
stroying them; Hee fed
them also with wonders,
even with *Bread* from
Heaven, and with water
from a dry Rock. Lawes
also and Commande-
ments

ments were plainly, but
strangely delivered to
them by *God* Himselfe,
and written with his own
Hand; they were also ac-
companied with Light-
nings and Thunders, the
sound of a Trumpet, a
Terrible voyce, and a
burning Mount. These
things added Majesty
and Authority to them,
and yet they were set
forth with more Advan-
tages; even many and
great Promises of blef-
sings, to the observation *Levit. 26.*
of them, and many and
fearefull Curses to the *Deut. 28.*
violation of them; be-
sides

sides God gave Priests to expound, and teach these LA V V E S ; even *Priests* endued with the wonderfull *Revelations* of *Urim* and *Thummim*. Hee also added to these a continuall succession, and Race of *Prophets*, who called on them early and late in the Name, and spirit of the *Lord*, to keepe their Hearts close to this Law, and to returne when they strayed from it. Yea when words and wonders would not serve, but they would both halt and turne out of the way, God often
spurd

The great Oracle. 81

spurd them up with sharp
Corrections and Cha-
stisements, to make them
remember the old way,
and to turne their feete
unto it, even to the Law,
and to the *Testimony*.

And now what could
God doe more for his
Vineyard, with outward *Esa. 5.*
helpes and Improve-
ments? For there wee
see it planted with the
most noble Plants, *Abra-*
ham, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*,
and hedged and dressed
with Lawes, wonders,
blessings, and chastise-
ments.

True it is that gene-
rally
E 5

rally they had but the
Deut. 29. remnants of the old gene
 4. rall, & *Free-will-grace*, this
Rom. 5. time of the Law being a
 13. time of Tryall, and Ex-
2 Cor. 3 6 periment, to see the ut-
Gal. 4. most strength, or rather
 25. weakenes, of *Free-will*,
Heb. 8. 9 and *Naturall grace*; And
Rom. 8. 3 therefore this Nation
Gal. 3. 2. was left to the Law,
 5. which was a Ministry
 of the Letter, and not of
 the Spirit, A Covenant
 of *workes*, and not of
grace, a thing which was
 weake because of the
 flesh, wherein it both
 found and left Mankind.

And whereas by the
 Law

Law, they should have
found out their owne
weaknes, and the Impo-
tency of naturall and
free-will-grace, and so
have beene directed by
it as by a Schole-Master,
to the effectuall *grace* of
God in Christ, the Jewes
without any scruple fall
roundly to the underta-
king of it, with their
common, naturall, and
Free-will-grace. For they
stumbled at the same
Block, whereat their
followers stumble, even
at this noone day; that
because Lawes, Com-
mands, or exhortations
are

21.
Where-
upon the
Jewes un-
dertake
to fulfill
a legall
obedi-
ence.

84 *The great Oracle.*

are given to them, therefore they have power to performe and obey them, whereas in this state of the fall, (wherein man, though he was cast down really by falling, yet he was imaginarily puffed up with Pride, a special fruit of his *fall*) the Law was given to convince man of his weaknesse, and not to shew him his strength and power. Yet these *Jewes* by the blindnesse of the same Pride, which the Law purposely intended to cast downe and abolish, fall stoutly to the under-

EX2. 19. 8

undertaking of the Law,
and they doe it peremp-
torily with often Repe-
titions; *All that the Lord*
our God shall speak unto
thee, wee will heare and doe
it. Though God present-
ly even but two verses *Deut. 5.*
after, findes the Heart *27. 29.*
wanting that should bee
the chiefe Keeper of this
Law; And very soone *Deut. 9.*
after againe findes them *12. 13.*
corrupt, both in heart
and hands, by abomina-
ble *Idolatry.*

Yet while thus they
goe about to shew their
strength, in fulfilling that
Law which was given
them,

them, to shew them their weakenesse, they become a most full and palpable Experiment of M A N S weaknes , and Inability to keepe the Law , even when hee undertakes it with his greatest strength. And in them wee see the great failing, of naturall *grace* and *free-will* , though most earnestly , and zealously set upon the keeping of the Law , and that with the Advantage of all outward Helps and Improvements. And they loudly teach us , that there is no other meanes
of

of a constant Holinesse,
and *obedience* to the Law,
but the powerfull and
effectuall *grace* of the *Spi-*
rit, given in the New
Covenant, which writ-
eth the L A W in our
Hearts; and powreth in-
to us a powerfull and sta-
ble seed and Roote of
Righteousnesse.

But that wee may not
seeme to slander these ^{22.} Yet faile
Jewes, but may give sound ^{and fall,}
proofes of their weak- ^{most fou-}
nes, as wee have produ-
ced the great, but false
vaunts and shewes of
their strength, let us
heare their owne *Pro-*
phets

phets accusing them, and not so much their Prophets as God himselfe by the Prophets.

Esa. I.

By one of them he saith, ah sinfull Nation, *A people laden with Iniquity, the whole Head is sick; and the Heart is faint, from the sole of the Foot even to the Head, there is no soundnes in it; but wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores. Every one is an Hypocrite, and every one speakeih folly.*

Ier. 10. 7.
8.

By another, hee saith: *I earnestly protested to your Fathers, in the day that I brought them out of the Land*

Land of Egypt, even unto this day, rising early and protesting, saying; Obey my voyce; yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their care, but walked Every one in the Imagination of their evill Heart.

By a Third, God sum- Ezek. 20.
meth up a story of his blessings upon Israel; and secondeth it with another story of Israels Rebellions; The Children of Israel (saith he) rebelled against mee, they walked not in my Statutes, neither kept my Iudgements to doe them.

The same generall inundation of wicked-
nes

Dan 9. II nes and Rebellion may weefinde acknowledged in *Danicks* Confession, and other complaints, and out-cries of the *Prophets*; But if *Israel* sinne, *Judah* should not transgresse; nor *Jerusalem* the Holy City, and seat of the Great King.

Ezek 16.
46. 46. Yea, but heare what the King himselfe saith; *Her Elder Sister is Samaria*, and her younger Sister is *Sodom*, & her Daughters, yet hath *Jerusalem* not done after their abominations, but as if that were a very little thing, shee was corrupted more then they all in her wayes. Mans

Mans free-will instead
of bettering, growes
Proud by Priviledges, and
Pride breeds security,
and security opens a way
to a Deluge of wicked-
nes. Thou didst trust in verse 15.
thine owne beauty (saith
the Lord) and playedst the
Harlot, because of thy Re-
nowne, and powredst out thy
Fornications on every one
that passeth by.

And thus Jerusalem
notwithstanding any ge-
nerall grace, is come to
a generall pollution, and
that in so full a Genera-
lity, that God saith to his
Prophet: Runne through
the

Icr. 5. 1, the streets of Ierusalem, and see and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if yee can finde a man, if there be any that executeth judgement, that seeketh Truth, and I will pardon it.

Behold an utter rebellion and *Apostasie*. And indeed if *Free-will* and generall grace would have done any thing toward the keeping of the Law, it seemes the-vertue and Efficacy of them should especially have appeared in the great, wise and learned men; Even in the *Princes*, *Priests*, and *Prophets*. For these

these seemed to bee the
top of that N A T I O N,
which was the Top of
Nations. And indeed,
God himselfe takes these
upon suspicion of most
likelihood to fulfill the
Law ; and therefore
saith ; *I will get mee to the.*
Great men , for these have
knowne the way of the Lord,
and the judgement of their
God.

But behold these men
though chieftest in natu-
rall Abilities, are chief-
ly and generally wick-
ed. *These be they* (saith Ier. 51. 5.
the Lord) *that have alto-*
gether broken the Roake ,
and

Ezek. 22.
26.

and burst the Bonds. The Priests have violated the Law, the Princes are like ravening Wolves, and the Prophets have daubed them with untempered Morter, and I sought for a man among them that should stand in the gap before mee, that I should not destroy it, but I found none. Behold a generall Apostasie; and greatest in the Greatest. The most able free-will men, of this undertaking, zealous, and Improved Nation, are the most able sinners.

But yet that there may
bee no height of wickednes

ednes to which they doe
not attaine , but that
their sinne may become
out of measure sinfull ,
and come to a kind of
perfection , or rather
a transcendency of wick-
ednes, these men become
the Murtherers of him
who was sent to be their
Saviour , and so they
make up that summe of
wickednes , which thus
Saint Steven casteth up *Acts 8.51*
for them ; Yee stiffe-neck- *52.*
ed and uncircumcised in
Heart, you doe alwayes re-
sist the holy Ghost; as your
Fathers did soe doe yee;
which of the Prophets have
not

6 : The great Oracle.

not your Fathers persecuted, and they have slaine them, which shewed before the comming of the Iust one, of whom yee have beene now the Betrayers and Murtherers. A most fearefull issue of free-will, attended with whatsoever generall grace; After all varieties and degrees of sinne, they come at last to this Great one, to put to Death the Lord of life.

And(now by the way)

Neb. 9. 30 If the Lovers of free-will,
Prov. 1. 23 and generall grace will
Zach. 7. 21 needs have this resisting
of the Holy Ghost, to be
a resisting of him in the
supplies

supplies of *generall grace*,
(though wee know that
there is a resisting of the
Holy *Ghost* speaking by
the *Prophets*) surely there
can scarce bee a greater
conformation of the per-
petuall suckcessenes of
generall grace, then from
these wordes, which af-
firme *that it hath alwayes*
beene resisted.

Thus have wee seene
another *generall Aposta-*
sie notwithstanding any
generall grace: An *Apo-*
stasie greater according
to the greatnesse of out-
ward Helpes: And ther-
fore the greateft experi-
F ment

riment of mans weaknes,
standing upon his owne
free-will. And so in this
People we see it plaine-
ly tryed, that man-kind
with whatsoever out-
ward helps and Improve-
ments, will needs fall,
while he standeth by his
own *free-will*; Yea though
he never so confidently
undertake to stand and
not to fall.

^{23.}
A summe
of Ex-
peri-
ments.
shewing
Mans
falls,
when he
stands
upon *free-*
will.

Wherefore let us now
in one view behold the
summe of many wofull
Experiments. First, the
fall of mankind in *Adam*
with *Free-will* and ge-
nerall *grace* in the state
of Perfection.

2. the Fall of mankind in the first world, with their great Abilities of Nature, and long lives.

Thirdly the fall of Mankind in a *Modell*, and Masterpiece, improved with all outward Helps, and Advantages; and hereupon let it bee considered, whether by the mouth of these three great witnesses, this word doe not stand; *That man standing upon his own Free-will, will not stand, but fall*; Surely mankind thus fallen, first, in the *State of perfection*, And secondly *under the Law of*
F 2 *Nature,*

Nature , And thirdly,
under the Law of Moses,
seemes to groane under
Ruines, and to cry out
Lord save us by thy speciall
and effectuall Grace, or else
we all perish , with free-
will and generall Grace.

But if man for Con-
tentions sake, will not
suffer the *Gentiles* to be
concluded in the Fall of
the *Iewes*, but will needs
doubt that the *Gentiles*
may stand by their Free-
will without Helpes,
whenthe *Iewes* fell with
helpes ; hee may thus
receive a Resolution of
his causelesse doubt, from
one

one that will not deceive him.

Saint *Paul* speaking of the *Gentiles* in this time of the Law, saith, That *Acts* 14. in times past God suffered 16. all Nations to walke in their owne wayes. Now their owne wayes, are wayes chosen by their own free-wills (such as they had) and attended with whatsoever Generall grace, either in Truth or supposition. But now let us see what wayes these W A Y E S of their owne were, and let the same *Paul* that told us the former, tell

us also the Later.

The Gentiles (saith he) *walke in the vanity of their minde, having the understanding darkned, being alienated from the life of God, and being past feeling have given themselves over to lasciviousnes, to worke all uncleannesse with greedinesse. And if yet you will see the deformed Character of the Gentiles, more lively described, behold it againe as it is drawne thus by the same*

Eph. 2. 12. Apostle: At that time yee were without Christ, being aliens from the common-wealth of Israel, and strangers

gers from the Covenant of promise, having no Hope, and without God in the world. Behold the most miserable state of the *Gentiles*; while the common-wealth of *Israel* stood; even an estate without a *Saviour*, without the Covenant, without Hope, and without God? And now concerning this estate, what would the friends of *free-will*, and generall *grace* have us to thinke or beleeve? would they have us to thinke, that the *Gentiles* had generall *Grace*, when they were

generally without *Christ*, without the **Covenant**, without *God*, and without *Hope*? A strange *grace* which is without *Christ*, without *God*, and without *Hope*. Or had they such a *grace*, and yet have brought themselves to bee without *Christ*, and without *God*, and without *Hope*? Then in them let us still behold the unhappy successe of *free-will* and generall *grace*, seeing the *Gentiles* notwithstanding any generall **GRACE**, or **FREE-WILL**, are come to bee without *Christ*,

The great Oracle. 105

Christ , without *God*, and
without *Hope*.

True it is that by these
and other places it ra-
ther appears , that
the GENTILES were
left to the first Rem-
nants of naturall *grace*;
without a new supply
of *generall GRACE* ;
both because they were
suffered to walke in their
owne wayes; which im-
plies that there was no
new Addition given
them for an alteration
of their wayes ; And
because S A I N T
P A V L when hee
goes about to convince
F 5 them

ROM I. 19
and 2. 14.
15.

them of wilfull sinne, he doth it by proving them guilty of crossing the light of Nature, even the Remnants of the old naturall *grace*, and and not the supplies of a new Generall *grace*. For against the very light of nature, and Instincts of naturall conscience, they gave away the Honour, and worship of the Creator to the Creature. But howsoever, if it be rather desired that they may be said to have had a new generall *grace*, it will but increase the notice, and prooffe of the perpetuall

petuall successefenes of it. For with whatsoever generall *grace*, their *Free-wills* were followed, the *Gentiles* are found sinners as well as the *Iewes*: *All Rom. 3.9. have sinned, and all have* ^{23.} *deprived themselves of the glory of God*; under the name of *Iew* and *Gentile* all mankind is contained, and so in the fall both of *Iew* and *Gentile*, it appeareth that Mankind will not stand alone, being left to *free-will*, but that the Creatures will have need to bee held, and established by the hand of the Creator; as

x *justified by the grace of a*

a Child is made safe from falling by being held by the hand of his Father, rather then by holding it.

24.
An experiment of mans, standing safe by Gods effectuall grace, amid the falls by free will under the Law.

But as the weakenesse of the Creature appeareth in mankind, thus universally falling while it standeth alone, so the strength of the Creature, supported by the Creator appeareth in a Remnant, which standeth during this generall Fall, and Ruine both of *Iew*, and *gentile*. For there goes on still a seed of *promise*, even a seed of the woman, which stands upright,

upright, when all the world falleth round about them. The effectuall *grace* of *God* preserveth them, while *free-will* with whatsoever generall *grace* in the rest is ūeffectual. For who dares to attribute the standing of this *Remnant* to Man, and his *free-will*, when the Spirit of *God* gives it unto *God*? Who dares to say, that this *Remnant* discerneth and leaveth it selfe, if *God* himselfe doe say, that hee hath left it, and otherwise it had not been left. That *God* himselfe doth
leave

leave this Remnant, God
 himfelfe thus affirmeth; }
 1 King, 19 *have left me feaven thou-*
 18. *sand in Israel; all the knees*
which have not bowed to Ba-
al. And that this Rem-
nant had not beene left,
if God had not left it, let
us heare the word of God
in the mouth of the
Prophet affirming it; Ex-
 1 Esa. 19. *cept the Lord had left us a*
Remnant, wee had beene as
Sodome, and like unto Go-
morrah. Wherefore out
of the Premiffes who can
frame a better conclusi-
on then the great Apo-
stle, who was taught by
the same spirit that spake
 the

the premisses ? There re-^{Rom. IX.}
maineth then a Remnant 5. 6.
according to the Election of
grace. And if of grace,
not of workes; Yea not of
mans free-will. For Is-
rael obtained not this
Remnant, but the Electi-
on of grace, and the
Grace of Election obtain-
ed it. The will of God,
and not the will of man
discerned and left this
Remnant; for if God had
not left this Remnant, the
Remnant would not have
left it selfe. If God had
not discerned it, there
had beene no difference
betweene the Remnant,
and

and the rest that fall; but one generall *Apostasie* would have swallowed upall; for the *Prophet* saith, that without this leaving of a *Remnant* by *God*, they had beene like *Sodome* and *Gomorrhah*; and wee know that in *Sodome* and *Gomorrhah*; not a man was left. So it still appears that to leave men to *free-will*, is to leave not any one man safe, but it is the way to leave all to Ruine and Misery, by the Creatures voluntary Instability; And on the other side, the onely sure safety of
the

the Creature is in his Creator , even in this, that his will is held by the powerfull will and effectuall *grace* of him that made his *will* and *himselfe*. Except Gods free and effectuall *grace*, did save some; mans free-will would lose all. And where Mans *Free-will* would lose all, yet even then, *Gods free-grace* saveth some ; so to Mans *free-will* still is ascribed all mans perdition; and to *Gods free-grace* all mans salvation.

But thus wee see both in those that fall by *free-will*

will, and that stand by *grace*, that according to the first Plott there goes on joyntly a succession of Experiments ; which shew the weaknesse of Mans *free-will*; and a succession of the promised *seed* of the woman, in which appeareth the strength of *Gods* effectual *grace*; each by comparison more illustrating the other. But hitherto the Experiments are very large, and the promised *seed* but small, that the Experiments may be full, and convincing in their fulnes ; as also because

cause the Head of this
Seed is not yet come, af-
ter whose comming the
God of order had ap-
pointed that the body
shall most fully bee exhi-
bited. And indeed the
fulnesse of time for his
comming seemed not to
bee perfected, untill the
fulnesse of thele Expe-
riments had manifestly
shewed an absolute need
of his comming.

But now these experi-
ments are growne to a
compleate sufficiency ;
Tryalls having bin made
of man *in the State of per-*
fection ; In the *State of Na-*
ture

^{25.}
The
weaknes
of free-
will
assisted
by gene-
rall grace
apearing,
then fitly
comes in
the Time
of grace
effectuall

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ture after the fall, and in the time of the Law, with the advantage of all outward Helpes and Improvements. And mans free-will still failing and falling with all outward helpes, this failing of mankind cries out for inward helpe, even for the effectuall and sure grace of the New Covenant, and for the Mediator of it after whose comming this grace is most plentifully to bee dispensed. When the world lies in his bloud, and in grosse darkenesse, and the shadow of Death, then

then is the fittest time for
the *day-spring from on high*
to visit it. Accordingly
now comes *Christ Iesus*
into the world, and hee
comes full of *grace* and
truth, even of that *grace*,
which creates truth in
the inward parts; writes
the Law in the Heart,
and not in Tables of
Stone. For as the Law
was by *Moses*, even that
dead Letter which found
mans heart stony, and
so left it. So came *grace*,
and truth by *Christ Iesus*;
even that *grace* which by
the efficacy therof turnes
harts of *stone* into harts of
flesh

flesh , and so writes the Law of *God* in them, that the Gates of *Hell* cannot prevaile against them , nor blot out this writing. And thus the world formerly dead in trespasses and finnes, doth rise from the dead on a sudden , and *Christ* giveth it light and life. And whereas before the Serpent generally triumphed over Mankind , notwithstanding any Power of *free-will* , or any generall *grace* attending it ; so that the Kingdome of *Satan* suffered violence ; Now this Chiefe *seede* of the woman

woman comming into
the World with abun-
dance of spirit, and *grace*
effectuall, the strong man
is not only bound and
cast out of his holds, but
his subjects fly from him
throughall Nations, and
so flock to this King of
Glory and *grace*, that they
come flying like Doves
to the windowes of the
Church from every Na-
tion; yea, they fly to it,
through losses, and Tor-
ments and varieties of *John 12:*
32.
Death, and so both for
the eminence in fervour,
and the multitude in
Number, this time is
generally

generally called *the Time of grace* ; the same in sense though in other wordes, which the *Herald Iohn*, and the *King Christ Iesus* call *The Kingdome of Heaven* ; for both of them say, the *Kingdome of heaven is at hand*. And indeed when effectually *grace* is most plentifully shed into the hearts of men, then are men most plentifully made the subjects of *God*, and then it may most truly be said, that the *Kingdome of Heaven is at hand*.

20.
werein
the Pro-
miser ful-
fills his
own
promise,
of a seed
out of all
Nations.

And thus especially,
and most apparently is
ful-

fulfilled, the great Promise of the *seed* of the woman; & the same promise renewed in *Abraham*, *In thy seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed.* After the coming of the head of this *seede*, the Body of this *seede* comes in following the Head, & joyning with it, and so making up the promised *seed* of the woman, & the *seed* of *Abraham*. And surely it is no more then need, that the promiser by sending his Son with abundance of *grace*, doe raise up his *seed*, and so performe this own promise; for *free-will*

G hitherto

hitherto hath made no seed of the woman, neither is it likely to beget any sons, but servants. Wherefore that the *Promiser* may not come short of his *promise* ; Hee will not leave the performance of them to Mans *free-will*; but hee that made the *promise* will performe what hee hath promised. For so indeed, and so only is the *promise* sure of Performance. And accordingly *Abraham* doth not fasten his *Faith* on mans *free-will* for the performance of Gods *promise* , but on God that promised.

Rom 4.20
&c.

promised. Hee was strong in Faith (saith the Apostle) giving Glory to God; and being fully perswaded, that what hee had promised, hee was able to performe. Yea this very Faith is imputed to him for righteousness, so that it deserves well to bee weighed, whether they that have not this faith of Abraham, have Abrahams righteousness; And whether they bee Sonnes of promise who give not the Glory of their being sonnes to the grace of the Promiser.

Note
1

Howsoever certaine it

G 2

is

124 *The great Oracle.*

is that the *promiser* begets the *promised seed* by the vertue of the promise.

Gen. 21.

12.

Rom. 9. 7.

Gal. 4. 28

29.

And herein was *Isaac* a Type al of the other sons of *Abraham*; For as *Isaac* was first promised to *ABRAHAM*, and then borne of the promise by the Power of the *promiser*; so the seed of *Abraham* promised to him out of all Nations, is borne of the promise, by the free sure and effectuall *grace* of the *promiser*.

27.
proved
by sun-
dry cf-

But that we may more plainly discern, that it is the effectuall *grace* of the

the new Covenant, (and not mans *free-will*) which after the comming of *Christ* being shed more abundantly, and generally hath performed this *promised seed* out of all Nations of the world; Let us looke into the Story and state of this time of *grace*, and therein take notice of the effects of this *grace*, and I doubt not but these effects will shew it plainly, not to be a *free-will-grace*, but *grace* effectually which hath begotten this *seed*, and made the Kingdome of Heaven to suffer violence,

fects of
grace,
in the
time of
grace.

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olence, presently after the appearance of the King of this Kingdome.

28.
A first,

A first effect, and event of which wee take notice in this time of *grace*, is a *generall rising* of the world after a *generall falling*. It was before shewed, that all Nations walked in their owne wayes, which were wayes of darkenes, and of the shadow of *Death*. An universall corruption and pollution had over-spread the face of the earth; and the state of the *Nations* or *Gentiles* was this, *That they knew*

not

not God; that they served
dumb Idolls, that they com-
mitted filthinesse even with
greedines. But now on
a suddaine, even pre-
sently after the appear-
ing of the *Mediator* of
the *New Covenant*, out of
these *Catholike Ruines*,
there ariseth a *Catholick*
Church; And whereas
before one man could
scarcely bee found in
Ierusalem, one *Citty* of
the world, though search-
ed with a candle (all o-
ther *Nations* being with-
out *God*, and without
Hope) Now the know-
ledge of *God*, attended

G 4 with

with *Faith* , *Hope* , and *Love* , beginning first with *Ierusalem* , goeth through all *Nations* , and out of them makes and gathers into one Body the disperſed *ſeed* of the *woman* , under the Head of this Body , and the Chiefe *ſeede* *Chriſt Ieſus*.

And now can any man thinke , that the ſame and no other cauſe hath produced this new and ſtrange effect (even the reviving , and reſurrection of the world from the *dead*) but that which brought it to the State of *Death*? ſhall we ſay that
free-will

free-will which delivered up Mankind into this miserable estate of generall Corruption, hath started up on a suddain, and that just at the time of the comming of our *Saviour*, and being the samethat it was before, and attended with the same *grace*, hath brought forth different effects, even an *universall Holinesse*, out of an *universall corruption*? surely it is most likely that the same cause would have brought forth the same effects; at least not so contrary; and if the same

cause would have brought forth not the same, but such different and contrary effects, why did it not doe it at some other time, as well as now? For now onely we see these effects, when the Mediatour of the New Covenant doth appeare with a fulnesse of *grace* and *Truth*. Surely if *free-will* had now on a suddaine started up, having no other *grace* but that which before was common and generall; and had now raised the *world* from *Death*, into which before the same *free-wil*

free-will had cast it; this time should be called rather, *the time of free-will*, then *the time of grace*; For now had *free-will* wrought wonders in the world; even that Great wonder of raising a dead *world* into life; and it had done it with one , and the same *grace* , but the successe of this *grace* was made different onely by the vertue of *free-will*. But what a great sacrifice is it, so to rob *God* of the *glory* of his mighty *grace* , and to give the same *glory* to weak man, and his inconstant *free-will*?

free-wil? How much more just, reasonable, and pious were it, to give to *God*, the things that are *Gods*? And since we read that the Sonne saith of himselfe, that if *hee* were lifted up from the Earth, *hee* would draw all Nations to him; when wee see all Nations thus drawne to him after his lifting up, what shall wee say but that *hee* hath drawne them? Agreeably whereunto the Church (which consisteth of all Nations) saith to him in the *Canticles*, *Draw mee, and I will run after thee.* And
God

God himselfe saith to Abraham concerning this turning, and drawing of the Nations, from Death unto life ; I have made thee a Father of many Nations; even God, who quickneth the dead. Yea the Father bound himselfe by promise to give these Nations to his son, when he made him King upon the holy hill of Sion; The Catholike Church is a gift of the Father to the Sonne; And indeed who should give a wife to their Sonne, but the Father of both? and this gift of the Father the sonne

*Psal. 2. 6.
8.*

sonne himselfe acknow-;
ledgeth, when he saithe

John 6. No man can come unto me
John 17. except the Father which
hath sent me draw him; and
again, thou hast given the
Sonne power over all flesh,
that he should give eternall
life, to as many as thou hast
given him. And behold I and
the children which God hath

Esa. 8. 18 given me: Therefore when
wee see this giving and
drawing of the world to
Christ, and salvation after
a generall overflow of sin
and corruption; Let us
attribute this effect to the
great drawer, and giver
of soules to his son. Let

us say that , that not
free-will hath drawne
them whom it selfe hath
slaine, but some *operative*,
mighty and *effectuall* grace
of God hath drawne the
wills of men , and made
them one spirit with
Christ Iesus in an heaven-
ly mariage. Let us ac-
knowledge that the Fa-
ther of *spirits* hath sent
down with his Son abun-
dance of *Spirit* (the pro-
mise of the new Cove-
nant) and that thence
comes this abundance of
spirituall *generation*; And
thus is fulfilled his oath
to *Abraham*, *In multiply-*
ing

136 *The great Oracle.*

Gen. 23.
17, 18.

*ing I will multiply thy seed
as the Starres in Heaven;
And in thy seed shall all
the Nations of the Earth
be blessed; Behold now the
chiefe seede Iesus Christ,
in whom all Nations are
to be blessed; And behold
also with him a seede out
of all Nations, to bee
blessed in him; a seed for-
merly dead by free-will,
but quickned and raised
to life and blessednesse
according to promise, by
Gods drawing, operative,
and effectuall grace.*

29.
A second
effect.

*A second effect, that
will not acknowledge
free-will, and generall
grace*

grace to be the cause of it, but necessarily imports some *free, speciall, and effectuall grace*, is this; that now in this time of *grace*, God is found of them that sought him not, while o- Rom 9.30 thers that have the zeale of ^{31.} God, and seeke Righteousnes, find not God; The not seeking Gentile findeth God and righteousness, while the seeking Jew findeth neither God nor righteousness.

True it is, that first the Gospell began to bee preached in *Ierusalem*, and the first plants, and Planters of it were *Jewes*;
but

but even in the Primitive times it took no such large Roote in the *Nation* of the *Jewes*, as it did after in sundry *Nations* of the *Gentiles*. For Saint Paul speaking of the generality of that *Nation* in his time, saith, *Israel hath not obtained that which it seeketh : And ; There is but a Remnant saved according to the election of grace.*

Rom. 11. 5. 7.

Yea Christ himselfe saith to Paul : make hast and get thee quickly out of Ierusalem, for they will not receive thy Testimony of mee : But of the Gentiles

Acts 22. 18..

verse 21. he saith ; Depart for I will send

send

send thee farre hence to the
Gentiles , To open their
eyes , and to turne them
from darkenesse to light,
from the Power of Satan
unto God.

But in succeeding ages,
this different successe
much more appeared, the
Jewes fleece growing still
more dry , while the
Gentiles were still more
watered with the dew of
grace.

And now what shall
wee say for *free-will* and
common *grace*; and what
shall wee attribute to
them in this eminent
Faith of the *Gentiles*? shall
we

we say that *Free-will* and generall *grace* gave them a fitnes to find *God*? But withall let us take notice of the fitnes it selfe, which was this; That they sought not *God*. And then all being put together must arise to this position; That *free-will* and *common grace* doe fit men to finde *God* by not seeking him; or, that not seeking of *God* is the fitnes by which *free-will* attended with *common grace* doth bring men to finde *God*.

Acts 9.

Even just as Saint *Pauls* breathing out threatnings and slaughter, was

a preparation of *free-will* to his conversion.

But how much more reasonable and just were it, to give the *glory* of their finding *God* to the free, powerfull and effectuall *grace* of *GOD* which findes them whom *free-will* hath blinded, and so made unable and unfit to find *God*; and by finding them makes them able and willing to find him.

A *free grace* it must needs be, for not *seeking God* can make no tye upon *God*, to bee found of them that seeke him not,
and

and a Powerfull *grace* it must be, which finding the wil averse from seeking, turnes it about, and makes it both to seek and to find; And indeed *Gods* Glory being the end of his *grace*, *God* hath more glory by being found of the not-seeking *Gentile*, then of the seeking *Jew*. For the *Jew* being a *free-will-man* and standing upon termes of *Iustice* with *God*, and undertaking to satisfie & pay him with a *legall Righteousnes*; If *God* should give such a one the *grace* to find him, how should hee have the
Glory

Glory of his *grace* from these *Jewes*, which think themselves already sufficiently able to find him by their owne *Abilities*, without any such new supply? Wherefore these Rich and full ones are sent empty away ; But the *Gentiles* being known and confessed sinners , *God is sure* to have all the Glory of the *grace* which he giveth to them, it being impossible that they should take to themselves the Glory of finding *God*, who must needs acknowledge that they sought him not. Wherefore

Gal. 2. 15.

Eph. 2. 11.
12.

fore as *God* for his owne
Glory in the time of
grace, by his free and ef-
fectuall *grace*, doth bring
to passe this effect ; that
the not-seeking *Gentile*
doth find *G O D* , so
this not seeking *Gentile*
that findeth this effect in
himself must needs who-
ly ascribe it unto *grace*,
and accordingly put a-
way the Glory of it from
himselfe , and give it on-
ly to the Giver of this
grace , which alone pro-
duced it. And the like
Glory shall hereafter be
given to *God* for the *Jew*
now shut up under un-
believe.

Rom. II.
30. &c.

belief. For when the *Jewes* have layne many *hundred* of yeares under a manifest unbelieve, then their Conversion, and believe ^{2 Cor. 3. 15. . 16} (the vaile being taken away) shall manifestly be knowne to bee wrought by the sole Mercy of *God*, and the effectuall *grace* of his *Spirit*. When *Israel*, in such a length of Time seeketh a *Saviour* but findeth not; when hee doth find; it must bee acknowledged, that not *Israel* but the *grace* of Election hath obtained and found; what *Israel* so long sought, but found not. H A

30.
A third
worke of
effectuall
grace.
1 Cor. I.
26. 27.

A third working in this time of *grace*, which cannot come from *free-will* accompanied with naturall, or Common *grace*, but must needs issue from especiall and effectuall *grace* is this; That mostly the *grace* of the *Gospell* makes the weake, the foolish, and those that are not, (in the eye of the world) doe excell in *Faith* and *Holinesse*; the mighty, the wise and the Eminent in being; those that are inferiour in Naturall Abilities, are superiour in *Faith* and *Holinesse*; Yea they

they so excell those that were before more excellent then themselves, that they make them ashamed, who before despised them. And when the stones which the builders doe reject and refuse, are made the chief Stones in the building, shall we say that this is *free-wills* doing? or shall we not say, this is the *Lords* doing, and *marvellous in the eyes* of carnall, and naturall Reason, which measureth Gods dispensations, by its own short and narrow line? For the *naturall* man

H 2 would

would by all meanes be-
leeve, that if there were
any Wisdome to bee
known, *Mistris* to be be-
leeved, vertues to bee
done, the *wise*, *Noble*, and
those whom they call *a-
ble men*, were most likely
to know, *believe*, and doe
them, because by such a-
bilities, the *free-wills* of
men are most likely to be
bended and directed to
the most excellent ob-
jects. And this the chief
Doctors and *Politicians* a-
mong the *Jewes* plainly
professe, when they aske
Do any of the *Rulers*; or
Pharisees beleve in him?

As

As if it were an infallible
Axiome in the *Logick* and
Language of *free-will*, that
if *Christ* were to be beleev-
ed on, none would doe it
more freely, and roundly
then the *Rulers* and *Pha-
risees*, the *Politicians* and
Schollers. But the *Scrip-
ture* it selfe denies the
Consequence; and plain-
ly shewes, that the *Rulers*
were gathered together a-
gainst the *Lord*, and against
his *Christ*? And this is the
Stone that was set at naught
of you builders. And there-
fore *Saint Paul* when he
lookes about for beleev-
ers, he cannot finde these

*Acts 4. 11
26. 27.*

150 *The great Oracle.*

wise men among them,
1 Cor. 1. and thereupon is faine to
20. cry out, *where is the wise
where is the Scribe? where
is the Disputer of the world?*
The learned *Scribes* a-
mong the *Jewes*, and the
disputing *Philosophers* a-
mong the *Gentiles*, which
seeme in the world to be
the wisedome of the
world; Neither know
nor embrace the wise-
dome of *God*; yer unlet-
tered and unlearned *Fish-*
Acts 4. 13 *ermen*, by *Faith* and *Love*
doe shame their learned
unbeliefe, and contempt
of *God* and his *Christ*.

And now when we see
weak-

weakenesse thus to overcome strength, can wee thinke that any common or generall thing, can bring this advantage on the side of disadvantage? In the things which are common we see the advantage on the side of wisdom, learning and education, and therefore there must be some special and Adventitious *Addition* to overcome this Advantage, and to turne it into a disadvantage. Where one balance is over-weighed by another, through a great difference of weights, if

wee see the lighter on a suddaine to weigh down the heavier, we presently looke about, for some hand that hath drawne downe the lighter, and made it to overcome the heavier. And so when wee see the wise so much to overcome the Foolish; the able the weake; yet withall doe finde againe that the foolish doth excell the wise, by whom he was, excelled, and the weake, the able, how can wee chuse but looke up for some hand of divine Power, and efficacy, that hath thus changed the
ballances,

The great Oracle. 153

ballances, and made the lighter to overcome the heavier? And indeed thus doth *God* most manifestly purchase his Glory, the end of his *grace*. For the wise and great men of the *world* are like *Gideons* Army, too great for *God*, *Judg 7. 2.* to get Glory by them. They will say that their owne wit, and their own Ability, hath given them their excellency, and so they will take the Glory of it from *God* to themselves. But when the weak and foolish doe beleeve and obey, and in their *Faith* and *Holinesse*

excell the wise and able ;
their weaknes and folly
cannot take *Gods* Glory
from him ; since to weak-
nesse, and folly belong
nothing but *shame and*
confusion of face. There-
fore they put away all
glory from themselves
unto *God*, and they glo-
ry in him , who by his
powerfull *grace* hath gi-
ven them an excellency
above those that excel-
led them, and hath made
their despised folly and
weakenesse to shame, and
confound that wisdom
and ablenes , which be-
fore despised and shamed
them. Lastly,

Laſty, for a Corolla-
ry and an abundant con-^{15.} A ſuper-
firmation, Let us heare added
the *Mediatour of the New* prooſe of
Covenant of grace, teach- effectuell
ing the Efficacy of his grace.
own grace in his *Time of* from the
grace: yea let us heare from the
him delivering it to his Lords
whole Church, the *Head*
to the Body? For ſo hee
doth, whiles he teacheth
and delivereth it to them
who are to teach, and
deliver it to the whole
Church. Yea he doth not
only teach it men, but
he Commands men to
ſpeak it to God. And in-
deed a Doctrine which
came

came from *God*, may well be presented to *God*. And if it ought to be spoken unto *God*, how much more ought it to be affirmed before men? And indeed, before all men must it be affirmed, which by all men ought to be spoken and repeated; No doubt a *Catholick Doctrine*, which *Christ* will have to be confessed, and presented to *God* by the *Catholike Church*.

This *Doctrine* is contained in that *Catholick Prayer*, wherein the whole *Church* meeteth with one mouth, and (as
it

it is fit for us to beleeeve)
with one *faith* and *heart*.

In this *Prayer*, God him-
selfe teacheth the *Church*
to pray unto *God*, and he
teacheth her to pray for
these great Effects of
grace, that his *Kingdome*
may come, and his will may
be done. He teacheth us
not to pray for a meere
Ability to effect, but for
the effects themselves, e-
ven that the one may
come, and the other may
be done. Hee teacheth
us not to pray meere-
ly for *free-wills*, and com-
mon *grace*, and that it
may be left to the choise
of

of our *free-wills*, whether by the good use of this *grace*, our *freewills* will make *Gods* Kingdome come, and his will to be done; but he teacheth us to pray down right, that his Kingdome may come, and his will may be done, even that these effects may assuredly bee produced. According to which Divine paterne, the blessed servant of his Master doth pray, *that the God of Peace would make them perfect in every good worke, working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight;* By which Prayers as wee
are.

Heb 13.
20. 21.

are taught to pray unto
God alone to grant these
effects, so we are taught,
that the efficacy of *grace*
which worketh these ef-
fects commeth from him,
to whom wee must pray
for them. And so by this
Prayer as well as by other
places of *Scripture* wee *Phil. 2. 13*
learne, that it is *God that* *Ezek. 36.*
worketh in us both to will *27.*
and to doe; And therefore
our Saviour rightly di-
rects his Church, not to
seek good-willing and
doing of our selves, and
our owne *free-will*, but of
God the true and power-
full Author of them. And
indeed

indeed he knew well that thus and thus only, there would bee a certainty of the comming of his Kingdome, and of doing of his *will*, if we seek to *God*, by whose effectuall power, the one doth come, and the other is done. And on the other side, hee knew also (by divine wisdom, and Humane experience) that if it were left to mans *free-will*, whether this Kingdome should come, or this will be done, there would bee no sure comming of the Kingdome, nor sure doing of the *will*.

Yea

Yea by all former experiments it would rather be sure , that neither the *Kingdome* would come , nor the *will* bee done, for such hitherto have beene the miserable consequences of *free-will*.

But therefore because God hath promised a *King* ^{psal. and 110.} *dome to Christ* , even a *Kingdome* that consists of subjects , that shall doe his *will*, he doth not leave the performance to the uncertainty of mans *free-will* (much lesse doth hee leave his promise to bee broken by *free-will* if it list) but hee makes good his

his owne promise, by his owne effectuall and unfailing *grace*. And as *God* that promised, thus performeth his promise, so by this Prayer are we directed to seeke him for this performance.

So are these *Petitions* like so many *Cannons*, overthrowing and dismounting the Lawes and *Canons* of *free-will*. For by those Lawes wee cannot pray to *God* for these effects, but onely for a meere Ability toward them. And having prayed for a meere ability to make the *Kingdome* to come

come, and the *will* to bee done, then if wee will pray any farther for the effects themselves, wee must pray to our owne *free-wills* for them; And so put our owne *free-wills* in *Gods* place, which is most blasphemous and impious. Yet how can this monstrous Impiety be avoyded by them? For how can they pray to *God* for these effects, which they doe not beleieve to be wrought by him? and how can they chuse but pray to their owne *free-wills* for these effects, if they beleieve them to bee wrought

wrought by their *Free-wills*? And their prayer to God must run in this shape or deformednesse; *Lord let thy Kingdome be at my pleasure, and thy will at the will of my Free-will, whether that shall come, or this shall bee done;* But to their owne *free-wills*, must they say, *Let Gods Kingdome come, and his will bee done.* An horrible confusion and overturning of our *Saviours* absolute and Catholick *paterne*? and a most miserable and base errour, that so weakens the wits of the deceived, that they

^they cannot rightly say
the *Lords Prayer*.

And as it doth not suf-
fer them rightly to use
this Prayer, so neither
doth it allow them to
give *God prayse* for the
grant of the *Petitions* con-
tained in this Prayer. For
how can they praise *God*
for the comming of his
Kingdome into their
soules, or for the submis-
sion and conformity of
their *wills* to the *will* of
God, if they doe not be-
leeve that *God* makes his
Kingdome to come into
them, and his *will* to be
done by them? They may
perchance

32.
And
from
Praise
due to
God.

perchance thanke *God* for their *free-wills* , and for common *grace* , both which are given to others as well as to themselves ; even to such who doe not suffer *Gods Kingdome* to come into them nor his will to be done by them .

But that *Gods Kingdome* comes into themselves, and his *will* is done by them, having received frō *God* no more then the former refractary *Rebels*, thanke whom shall they for these *different effects*, but themselves and their owne *free-wills* ? and thus doe

doe they fall into a more shamefull, or shamelesse Pride and unthankfules, then the proud *Pharisee* himselfe. For the *Pharisee* (perchance for very shame) said *I thanke thee O Father that I am not like other men*: But these men bind themselves to say, *I thanke thee O mine owne selfe, or O mine owne free-will, that I am not like other men.*

How much better were it to obey the King of *grace and Glory*, when he teacheth us to pray to God, that his *Kingdome may come unto us*, so that
we

King
James up-
on the
Lords
Prayer.

we may bee discerned by him from other men who are rebellious and disobedient, and withall upon the same grounds to give *praise* unto God for any difference that is betweene us and the worst of men? and here unto the Doctrine of the *wisest King* of the Christian *world* inviteth us while hee commenteth upon these *Petitions* of the *King of Kings*. He saith that in this *Petition*, *Thy Kingdome come*, wee desire that the Church of God may more and more bespread upon the face of the Earth, and that the

the *Number of the Elect* may bee multiplied; and likewise that his will may be done in *Earth*, as it is in *Heaven*; (The effect which the *Kingdome of Heaven* in this *Earth* will produce.)

And thus to God is ascribed the multiplying of the *Elect*, and the coming of his *Kingdome* in such powerfull manner, that it may produce this effect of doing his will. And thus wee may both pray to him, and praise him for the coming of his *Kingdome*, and the glorious effect of it, which is the doing of Gods will. I And

And now it needs not to be wondered at of this *Orthodox King*, not long before his *Death*, did brand those *misbeleever*s, who crossed this *Doctrine* by comparing them with the ancient *Hereticks*, the *Pelagians*. For surely if at any time, I thinke at the time which is neereſt to *Death*, the ſoule of every good *Chriſtian* is fardeſt from this errour, and moſt againſt it. For then wil he moſt zealouſly and heartily pray, that *Gods Kingdome* may ſpeedily and fully bee fulfilled in himſelfe, and the other
members

members of Christ , and that they maybe all conformed in their wills unto Gods will , not unlike to the dying prayer of Christ himselfe.

That they all may be one, *Iohn 17.*
as thou Father art in me, and *15.*

I in thee. And at that time also a *Saint* will bee fardest off , from taking to himselfe the Glory , and Praise due unto God , in regard of any effects of *grace* in him, or any difference between himselfe, and the worst of *Publicans* and *sinner*s. So that my *Charity* can hardly thinke that any *Christian*,

I 2 if

if he dye *awaked* can die
an *Arminian*.

33.
Com-
mands
direct us
to pray
to the
Com-
mander.

But now before we part
from these *Petitions*, let
us make an other use of
them. Let us learne from
them, that when we heare
any Commands out of
Gods word, to doe *Gods*
will, where we must fetch
power to effect these
Commands. For by these
and the like *Petitions* wee
are taught, upon the
hearing of such Com-
mands, to fetch from the
Commander himselve *ef-*
fectuall power to fulfill his
commands. Wee must
not with the *Jewes* and
their

their *Seſaries* from theſe commands, gather *Arguments* for *free-will*, but rather proofes of our need of *grace*, and helpe from the Commander. For if it bee obſerved by any carefull Reader of holy *writ*, hee ſhall finde that the wayghtieſt commands in *Scripture*, are paralleled with *Petitions* to the Commander for the effecting of thoſe his Commands.

If in one place God com- *Ezek. 18.*
mands, *make you new* *30.*
Hearts and turne from all *1er. 31.*
your transgreſſions, In o- *38.*
ther places we finde Petiti-
ons

174 *The great Oracle.*

cions answerable to these
Psal. 51. *Commands : Create in me
20. a cleane heart, and renew a
right spirit witin me. And
turne thou me, and I shall
be turned. If in one place
I Iohn 3. we read these commands;
2 Thess. 1 That wee beleeeve in Christ,
11. and love one another, in o-
ther places hee shall read
these Petitions : That God
will fulfill the worke of Faith
Luk. 17. 5. with power : And Lord in-
crease our Faith. And that
Eph. 3. 17 Christ may dwell in their
18. Hearts by Faith; That they
Phil. 1. 9. may be rooted and grounded
in love; And, that love may
abound more and more.
Briefly the Scripture is
full*

full of these *Petitions*, and in this point the 119th. *Psalm* is a *brief of the Scripture*. And agreeable hereto is the *Liturgie* of our Church, both in the *Petitions* for the King; That *God* would keepe him in *holinesse* and *righteousnes* of life; And that *God* would rule his heart in *Faith*, *Feare* and *love*; and likewise in *Petitions* for the whole congregation; that *God* would give them an heart to love and dread him, and diligently to live after his *Commandements*; that they may live a godly, righteous,

and sober life ; and that they may bring forth the *fruits* of the *Spirit*.

Now most manifest it is , that commands thus, seconded with *Petitions*, doe directly turne our eyes from our selves unto *God* , to fetch from him the fulfilling of his *Com-mands*. And so wee are plainly taught, that not our own *freewills* by their moving and managing of *grace*, but *Gods* powerfull and effectuall *grace* moving and actuating our *wills* , causeth the *mil* of *God* to bee done by us on *Earth*, as it is done in *Heaven*. Thus

The great Oracle. 178

Thus it appeares that
the main Body and frame ^{34.} The
of the *word*, is an Entire summe &
confutation of the suc- conclusi-
cesse of *free-will*, and a on.
mighty affirmation of the
need of *Gods* effectuall
grace. For with an united
voyce, it doth speake a-
loud to the *world*, that
free-will with common
grace, will but make worke
for *justice* and *justifie ju-*
stice, but it will lose man,
and leave him inexcusa-
ble in his losse. But *Gods*
speciall and effectuall
grace alone doth stablisch
Holinesse, and so leads
men safely to Glory. And

in the safety of men wrought by this *grace*, stands the plot of *Gods* Glory ; this being the *seed* of the woman, which hath undertaken by *promise* to make victorious over the *seed* of the *Serpent* ; and this being the *seed* of *Abraham*, to whom he hath promised blessedness, and the *Land* that floweth with *Milke* and *Honey* ; and this being the *Church* and *Body* of *Christ* to whom a *promise* is given, that the *Gates* of *Hell*, shall not prevaile against it.

Mat. 16.

So that they that run against this *grace*, run against

gainst the whole streame
and current of the *Scripture*,
they runne against
mans salvation, & which
is worst of all, against the
Plot of *Gods* Glory. But
let them know againe,
that if they run against
the *word of God*, and the
Glory of *God*, yea if they
run against the *salvation*
of his *Church*, which hee
hath undertaken : The
same *God*, whose this
Church, and *word*, and *Glo-*
ry are, will run against
them ; and make good
his *Church*, and *word*, and
Glory against them.

It is a fearefull thing
to

to make warre with the living *God* ; Especially such a warre as goeth about to take away his *Glory* from him , which he will not give to any other.

Let us remember the fatall issue of fighting with *God* ; these shall make war with the *Lamb* , and the *Lamb* shall overcome them , for he is the *Lord* of *Lords* , and King of *Kings* ; and who ever fought against *God* , and prospered ?

Rev. 17.
14.

1oh. 9. 4.

Wherefore much rather let the Counsell of *Gamaliell* be acceptable ;
Be

*Bee yee not found Fighters
aga nst God. For as it is* *Acts 5.33*
39.
most certaine that the
Enemies of God shall bee
overthrowne, so is that
also most certaine which
the same Gamaliel said,
that if this doctrine bee of
God, it cannot bee over-
throwne.

Now that it is of God,
before hath beene shew-
ed, and that it cannot be
overthrowne, time and
experience have proved.
For as in all times the
sonnes of *grace* have ac-
knowledged, that *grace*
by which they were be-
gotten, so more notably
and

and aparantly, ever since this Doctrine of *grace* was cleared against the *Pelagians* by blessed *St. Augustine*, (a man whom *grace* had raised to be a defender of *grace*) it hath lived, and stood strong against the Enemies of *grace*. Gods hand hath still maintained Gods owne cause.

Both which the profound *Bradwarden*, hitherto an irrefragable *Doctor*, excellently sheweth; He sheweth it to be the Cause of *God*, not onely in the Title, but the body of his Booke. And he sheweth
in

in the *Preface*, that *Gods* owne hand maintaineth his owne cause, when he saith, that in his wrestling with *Pelagius*, not his owne but *Gods* strength made him a Conquerer, whom otherwise *Pelagius* had foyled.

And hence it was, that though then (as himselfe saith) the Priests of *Baal* were foure hundred, and himselfe but one, yet hee feared not to encounter them: And we see with what successe; For his work liveth and flourisheth in the *Church*, and he in it, but they with their
Here

Heresies are gone into darknes, even into *Upper*; if not *utter* darknes, into the darknesse of oblivion in this world; howsoever it fare with them, in regard of the utter darknes in the *world* below.

True it is, and it may not bee denied, but the naturall man, being only borne of a *free-will* Root, that is of the first *Adam*, seeth not beyond *Free-will*, and therefore bends all the force of naturall wit, to prove that which it seeth, and to disprove what it seeth not. And hence it is that *Philosophers*,

phers , *Iustitaries* , and *Politicians* are so vehement and entire for *free-will*. And indeed by this Reason , these that are most eminent in naturall abilities, will be most earnest for it. But on the other side, effectually *grace* is a gift of the second *Adam*, and so without the *Horizon* of the first, and of those that are meereley descended from him. It is a *New Name* which none doe know, but those that have it : No wonder then if it be opposed by them that have it not , and therefore know it not; as
it

it were also a great wonder, if they that know it should deny it, because they that know it not, do deny it. To demand this were most unreasonable. Rather let their *blindnes* be guided by the *sight* of others, then the *sight* of others be guided by their *blindnes*. For if the blind lead the seeing, they will both (but the seeing most wilfully and unexcusably) fall into the ditch.

But if some will needs have and hold what they see, even *Free-will* with the Remainders of Natural

all *grace*, let them by the same Reason allow others to hold that which they see ; and they see plainly , that by the *grace of God* they are that which they are, and that *not they but the effectuall grace of God* in them hath made them to differ from the worst of men : And hereupon they desire that it may be lawfull for them to give the whole glory of their discerning, safety and their stability, not to themselves and their owne *free-wills*, but to *God*, that so when they glory, they may glory in
the

the *Lord*: which glory is the maine end, both of this *doctrine*, and this *word*.

And accordingly let this worke end in the wordes of Saint *Paul*: *God shall preserve us in his heavenly Kingdome; To him be Glory for ever and ever. Amen.*

St. Augustine *Enchirid.*
Cap. 98.

Altissimo ac saluberrimo Sacramento, universa Facies, ac ut ita dixerim, vultus sanctarum scripturarum bene intuentes id admonere invenitur, ut qui gloriatur,

*Gloriatur, in Domino glori-
etur.*

*Luther de servo Arbitrio.
Cap. 208.*

AD ultimam hujus libri
partem venimus, qua
ut promisimus, copias no-
stras, producere debemus
contra liberum Arbitrium,
sed eas non producemus om-
nes, quis enim hoc effecerit
parvo libello, cum universa
Scriptura à nobis stet per sin-
gulos apices & literas?

Hist: Concil: Trid: Lib. 2.

THE most esteemed
DIVINES amongst
them,

them thought the (*Do-
ctrine* of free Election
working by effectuall
grace) to bee Catholicke
&c. But some others
thought of lesse esteeme
opposed this opinion.
&c.

The first opinion as it
is mysticall and hidden,
keeping the mind humble
and relying on *God*, with-
out any confidence in it
selfe; knowing the defor-
mity of sinne, and that
excellency of *Divine
grace*; so this second was
plausibile and popular,
cherishing humane pre-
sumption, and making a
great

great shew, and it pleased more the predicant *Fryers*, then the understanding *Divines*. And the Courtiers thought it propable as consonant to politique reasons. The Defenders of this using humane reasons prevailed against the others, but comming to the *Testimonies* of the
SCRIPTURES,
they were manifestly overcome.

FINIS.